

For Immediate Release

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Santa Clara Valley Water District

Trail Improvements Allow Residents More Room to Wander

Lower Guadalupe River Trail Dedication Celebrates Over Six Miles of Trail Additions

San José - - The newest section of the Lower Guadalupe River Trail opens with a ribbon cutting on Saturday, April 5, 11 a.m. and nearly triples the trail's length from Mineta San José Airport to Alviso and provides access to walkers, cyclists, and bicycle commuters to North San José. The ceremony will take place at the trail entrance at Airport Parkway and Airport Boulevard.

"The newest connection of the Lower Guadalupe River Trail opens this scenic jewel of our City to the view of thousands of residents. I'm thrilled to celebrate the culmination of years of effort to make this critical link," said San José Councilmember Sam Liccardo.

The regional partnership of the City of San José, County of Santa Clara, and Santa Clara Valley Water District has added 6.4 miles to the existing 2.6 miles of trail that winds along the river through Guadalupe River Park near downtown San José, past the airport, and crosses under the Bayshore Freeway to reach Gold Street in Alviso.

"The City's Green Vision sees completion of the 100-mile trail network within 15 years. Openings such as the Lower Guadalupe River Trail permit us to deliver on this commitment," added San José Councilmember Kansen Chu who represents this area of the city. "This new trail offers nature lovers a new opportunity to explore the Guadalupe River's scenic backdrops and better access to the San Francisco Bay."

The addition also includes new paved under-crossings and surface improvements at Airport Parkway and Highway 101, providing access to the gravel trails along the riverbanks.

"This extension will help Santa Clara County's network of trails touch every neighborhood in the area," said Ken Yeager, a Santa Clara County Supervisor. "Not only does this allow residents to experience the natural beauty of our county, but it also provides a great way for families and individuals to get exercise right in their own neighborhoods."

In 1995, the County Board of Supervisors adopted the Countywide Trails Master Plan that defined trail networks including the Lower Guadalupe River Trail. In January 2003 San José and the Water District executed a Collaborative Action Plan that simplified the joint use of facilities

for trail purposes. The City proposed a trail system along the District's maintenance road along the Guadalupe River, and the City Council approved the Lower Guadalupe River Trail Master Plan in May 2005.

The City's view of trails as commuting facilities is supported by the federal government's funding support through the Safe, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This act, which was signed by President Bush in August 2005, provided \$6.4 million in funding for the development of the Lower Guadalupe Trail System.

Rosemary Kamei, District Board Chair, added, "Environmental stewardship is part of our mission at the water district. We know trails are important to the high quality of life we enjoy. That's why we were pleased to collaborate with the City of San José and Santa Clara County on this project. We hope people will take advantage of the trails and experience all that they have to offer."

A study was conducted in September 2007 by the City of San José, Friends of the Guadalupe River Park & Gardens and the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition. It found that nearly 1,000 people use the Guadalupe River Trail system on a daily basis, and of those, nearly 40% are commuting to and from work. This type of data supports the San José "Mayor's Green Vision" for development of a 100-mile interconnected trail network that can support both recreation and off-street commuting. This federal funding also supports the design of a future paved trails system that will further enhance the Lower Guadalupe River Trail.

Although the official dedication of the Lower Guadalupe River Trail System is on April 5, the under-crossings at Airport Parkway and Highway 101 have been open to the public since December 31, 2007.

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